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SUBJECT: SCENESETTER FOR THE VISIT OF ASSISTANT SECRETARY JENDAYI  
FRAZER TO KINSHASA, AUGUST 31-SEPTEMBER 2

Summary  
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1. (SBU) The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is slowly grappling with fundamental governance, security and development challenges following historic 2006 national elections. The promise of peace and democratization and the importance of the DRC as the linchpin of Central Africa and beyond have made it one of the Department's top seven priority assistance countries in Africa. The January 2008 Goma accords between the government and armed groups, facilitated by the U.S., UN and EU, created a process aimed at achieving peace, security and development in the country's eastern provinces. Widespread insecurity only amplifies a political and judicial vacuum throughout the country, contributing to a pervasive climate of impunity in which armed men routinely abuse civilians, particularly women and children. There are clear signs the population is growing impatient with the pace of the government's efforts and skeptical that democracy can solve the country's problems. Your visit will reaffirm U.S. commitment to a long partnership with the Congolese people to develop democratic institutions and reinforce our shared objective of a peaceful and prosperous DRC.

2. (SBU) Summary continued: The Mission's overriding goals focus on reinforcing Congolese political will and capacity for robust and effective leadership and oversight at all levels of government, while promoting broad economic development. Together with Washington and other diplomatic missions, we will identify and engage key decision-makers and implement results-oriented initiatives to support transparent governance, legislative accountability, judicial independence, political pluralism and provincial and local autonomy. Our assistance programs focus on enhancing security, fighting poverty, and supporting democratic reforms -- fully supporting and reflecting the transformational diplomacy goals laid out by Secretary Rice. Foreign assistance resources for the DRC are increasing. The FY 2006 bilateral foreign assistance budget for DRC programs totaled \$68 million, including funds received from central accounts but excluding humanitarian assistance. Amounts for FY 2007 rose to \$71 million (with supplemental funding), and rose again in FY 2008 to over \$150 million (also including supplemental funding), including increases for peace and security (including military cooperation), governing justly and democratically, health, HIV/AIDS, education, and economic growth programs. Humanitarian assistance has provided an additional \$80 million per year on average during this period. This, however, does not reveal the full story: total U.S. assistance, including our contribution of approximately \$300 million to MONUC plus significant donations to other international organizations, are likely to bring our total assistance levels to the DRC this year to more than \$600 million. End summary.

Peace and Security  
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13. (SBU) Internal and external challenges facing the Congolese military (FARDC) will be a key topic of discussion during your visit. The FARDC suffers from low morale, weak command and control, widespread corruption, haphazard administration, poor operational planning, limited training and equipment, and questionable military capability. State and irregular military forces are responsible for many of the worst human rights abuses in the country.

14. (SBU) Reform of the DRC's security services has achieved little success to date. DRC plans for reform of the military, police, and justice sectors presented at a late-February international conference on security sector reform (SSR) and follow-up sessions lack a sense of priorities and appear to be little more than laundry lists to which donors are expected to pledge. In August 2008 the DRC launched another round of technical roundtables in each of the following sectors: formation of a Rapid Reaction Force; Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR); and the situation in the east. While serving as a useful forum for communication, progress has been slow. Additionally, USG plans to fund the training of an infantry battalion are eagerly awaited by the GDRC; your interlocutors will be keen to discuss this with you during your visit. However, it will be important to focus on the fact that the USG has significant expectations of the GDRC in the context of this training, particularly those outlined in the proposed memorandum of understanding.

15. (SBU) Other USG assistance to the DRC security services is making an impact in the country. \$20 million in FY 2008 PKO funds is projected for the training of an infantry battalion. FY 2008 ESF Supplemental resources and FY 2008 National Defense Authorization

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Act (NDAA) Section 1207 resources provide support for stabilization, SSR, and military justice strengthening efforts. We have used PKO funds to rehabilitate the officer training institute and provide training for staff officers and military magistrates and investigators. The International Military and Education Training Program (IMET) funds U.S.-based courses that include English-language training. INCLE (International Law Enforcement and Control) funds from the Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) are being allocated to stand up the Congolese border police in Ituri District. The Nonproliferation, Antiterrorism, Demining and Related Projects appropriation - "NADR" -pays for the destruction of obsolete ordnance. In addition, the \$300 million in U.S. funding for MONUC now also supports its new FARDC training program, designed to assist the military plus up its capabilities in the context of its operations in the east.

16. (SBU) Other partners are also involved in SSR. The EU has long had significant involvement in the Congolese security sector, including a European mission to assist the FARDC, known as EUSEC. EUSEC has been involved in a number of very useful projects, including carrying out a census of the FARDC and implementing reform in the payment system of the military. On a bilateral basis, France, Belgium and other EU member states have provided substantial funding for military reform and training programs. South Africa and Angola have also played major roles, including the training of FARDC units.

#### Challenges in the East

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17. (SBU) You may also wish to discuss the Goma and Nairobi processes with your interlocutors and the challenges both are facing at the moment. Implementation of the Goma accords - particularly in terms of reaching agreement on issues related to disengagement, brassage, and DDR -- has proven to be problematic, highlighted by recent unwillingness on the part of the CNDP to engage seriously in the process. The GDRC needs to hear the message that the USG is committed to the success of the accords and that, despite difficulties, the government must stay within the bounds of the process and not opt to resolve the CNDP problem by force.

¶8. (SBU) Equally, the government needs to hear the message that the USG and international community expect them to do everything in their power to isolate and cut off support for the FDLR to ensure its disarmament, per the Nairobi communique. You may also, however, wish to congratulate the GDRC for its recent success in convincing FDLR-RUD fighters to disarm and relocate. In addition, you may also wish to bring up the Rewards for Justice program and the importance the USG places on it as a tool for capturing fugitives.

#### MONUC

¶9. (SBU) MONUC consists of an 18,000-strong uniformed peacekeeping operation, with military contingents in all provinces and major cities, and more than 3,000 civilian employees. With an annual budget of over \$1 billion, it is the largest and most expensive UN peacekeeping operation in history. The U.S., as the largest contributor to the UN peacekeeping budget, funds 27 percent of its expenditures, i.e., approximately \$300 million per year. India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, South Africa, Uruguay and Nepal are the leading contributors of peacekeeping troops, each with contingents of more than 1,000. Much more than a simple peacekeeping operation, it provides military, transportation, communications and administrative services in the absence of a meaningful GDRC presence outside Kinshasa and most provincial capitals. MONUC's Radio Okapi is the only FM station broadcasting throughout the DRC in the country's five main languages. MONUC also maintains regular flights to all major Congolese cities.

¶10. (SBU) Another key aspect of MONUC's activities involves what is known as the "stabilization plan," which aims to lay the groundwork for the mission's eventual and orderly withdrawal, particularly from the east. The plan is supported by an assistance package for implementation, and consists of four principal components: a security component, by which armed groups are disbanded through a combination of political and military means; a political component, which involves GDRC political actors advancing the peace processes; a state authority component, by which institutions such as the police, judiciary, and other elements of public administration are strengthened; and a return and reintegration component, which aims to aid and resettle ex-combatants, refugees, and internally

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displaced persons in local communities. The USG is providing support either directly to or in cooperation with all aspects of the stabilization plan through the FY 2008 Foreign Assistance budget, the FY 2008 Supplemental ESF appropriation, and the FY 2008 NDAA Section 1207 appropriation.

#### Democracy and Governance

¶11. (SBU) The Congolese people had high expectations that the democratic process would improve their lives. The relatively large turnout in the July and October 2006 presidential and parliamentary elections demonstrated hopes for a democratic system of government. New institutions, however, have been slow to generate momentum. The 500-member National Assembly counts only a small number of members with legislative or government experience. The Assembly and the 106-member Senate have only begun to consider a heavy agenda of major legislation. Provincial officials are unfamiliar with decentralized authority and lack resources, money and experience. Elections for local and municipal officials are tentatively scheduled for mid-2009 at the earliest.

¶12. (SBU) Parties and candidates aligned with Kabila's electoral coalition, the Alliance for the Presidential Majority (AMP), have working majorities in the National Assembly and Senate, as well as eight of 11 provincial assemblies and ten of 11 governorships -- leaving the opposition with little apparent political clout.

¶13. (SBU) USG governance and institutional reform programs, budgeted at \$10.2 million for FY 2007 and \$18.6 million for FY 2008,

focus on combating corruption and human rights abuses, developing independent judicial and legislative institutions, facilitating decentralization of state authority, and supporting local elections.

Objectives include long-term transformation, as well as direct citizen access to services. USAID has provided assistance to National Assembly deputies drafting key legislative proposals, including laws relating to the financing of political parties, decentralization, the establishment of a national election commission and the protection of human rights. In addition, USAID has conducted capacity-building seminars for National Assembly deputies and staffers, supported the creation of provincial watchdog and advocacy groups to encourage citizen participation in democratic processes, and worked to develop skills of political party members, foster grassroots anti-corruption initiatives, and establish mobile courts and legal aid clinics.

#### Human Rights and Gender-Based Violence

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¶14. (SBU) Security forces and armed groups remain responsible for most human rights violations in the DRC, including unlawful killings, disappearances, torture, rape and arbitrary arrest and detention. Human rights advocates have extensively documented the involvement of these elements in such abuses. Constitutionally-protected freedoms of association, speech, and protest are increasingly disregarded by security and administrative authorities using vague Mobutu-and colonial-era laws to arrest and detain perceived critics. The Embassy is working with NGOs and other diplomatic missions to encourage Parliament to bring these laws into line with the 2006 constitution.

¶15. (SBU) Sexual violence against women and girls in eastern DRC is pervasive. While most of the recorded attacks have been by armed groups and the FARDC, reports of rape by civilians is increasingly prevalent. A general climate of impunity does nothing to discourage these acts. In a recent report, the UN Human Rights Integrated Office in the DRC (UNHRO) stated that, despite strengthened laws on sexual violence, "law enforcement personnel and magistrates continue to treat rape and sexual violence in general with a marked lack of seriousness. Consequently, men accused of rape are often granted bail or given relatively light sentences, and out-of-court settlements of sexual violence cases are widespread." In fact, relatively few cases are reported to the police, and fewer still result in prosecution.

¶16. (SBU) USAID and the Departments of State and Defense support activities to respond to and prevent sexual violence through a variety of interventions in the eastern provinces. Since 2002, USAID has allocated more than \$10 million for activities to combat gender-based violence in the Eastern DRC. In FY 2008, USAID is programming \$1.5 million to continue its holistic program of care and support for rape survivors and other victims of sexual abuse.

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The Defense Institute for International Legal Studies (DIILS) taught two three-week training sessions on the investigation of sex crimes in 2008 to nearly all 350 of the FARDC military magistrates and police investigators with investigatory and adjudicatory roles. The program, funded through PKO monies, sponsored sessions in eight different sites across the country, and received laudatory comments from the international community. A follow-up proposal for additional DIILS training is currently under review.

#### Economic Growth

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¶17. (SBU) Most of the estimated 60 million Congolese have not benefited from the country's vast natural resources, including minerals, forests and rivers. With over 90 per cent unemployment and an informal sector that rivals the formal economy in size, most people survive on less than one dollar a day. The economy is dominated by a large informal sector, and suffers from poor infrastructure and endemic corruption. The government does not fully control its resources, and the illegal exploitation of timber,

diamonds, gold, and strategic metal ore continues. Despite annual GDP growth of nearly six per cent in 2007, per capita GDP is only around \$120. At the current growth rate, per capita income will not reach pre-independence levels until the middle of the 21st century. Economic growth, spurred largely by the mining sector in Katanga province, is estimated to be slightly higher for 2008, but inflation is forecast to double from under 10 percent in 2007 to a projected 20 percent or higher in 2008.

¶18. (SBU) Despite some progress on macroeconomic and financial reforms since 2003, the IMF Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility (PRGF) lapsed in March 2007 due to continued government overspending and failure to meet structural reform targets. The DRC received little or no direct outside assistance to support a \$2.5 billion budget for 2007 and a \$3.6 billion budget for ¶2008. The DRC has been granted Highly Indebted Poor Country (HIPC) status. However, without a PRGF program in place and with little prospect of renegotiating one before the end of 2008, the DRC will not receive any much-needed debt relief.

¶19. (SBU) The 2008 budget, signed into law by President Kabila in January, calls for expenditures of \$3.6 billion, much of it for government salaries (including civil servants, public school teachers and military personnel) and the security sector. Without outside budget support in 2008, the GDRC may again face large deficits, which it has historically financed through increased currency issuance. The GDRC is making a concerted effort to raise state revenue levels, but this may not solve the budget shortfall problem. Since January 2008, GDRC spending has apparently been contained within budgetary limits, but many of its expenses will come due only during the last quarter of the year. Military expenditures in eastern Congo appear to be driving much of the recent overspending.

¶20. (SBU) The GDRC is working to implement the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) approved in mid-2006 by the IMF and World Bank boards. The government's five-year program, approved by the National Assembly in February 2007, is based on the PRSP and focuses heavily on President Kabila's five priority areas: infrastructure; employment; education; water/electricity; and health. Economic growth will depend on progress in these areas. In early 2008 the GDRC concluded a major agreement with the Chinese government. Though not all details have been made public, the GDRC announced that it will exchange over 8 million tons of copper and over 200,000 tons of cobalt for an estimated \$6 billion in Chinese-funded infrastructure projects, including roads, railway, universities, hospitals, housing and clinics. China will also spend an estimated \$3 billion in the mining sector on as-yet-unnamed mining concessions. China is exploring other possible "infrastructure for natural resources" deals with the DRC.

¶21. (SBU) The USG is an active participant in the international donors' Country Assistance Framework (CAF) process for 2007-10, designed to align assistance strategies and support GDRC efforts to implement the PRSP. Bilateral USG foreign assistance funding for economic growth is modest, with only \$8 million designated for activities to increase agricultural productivity, although this is supplemented by a \$30 million, three-year Food for Peace program to help spur rural development. USAID has active global development alliances with mining, agro-business and health partners.

¶22. (SBU) U.S. commercial interests in the DRC are small but growing, with a U.S. company (Seaboard Corporation) running the

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largest flour mill in the country and an American mining company (Freeport McMoRan) gearing up to produce an estimated 100,000 tons of copper metal by early 2009. USAID has an existing public-private partnership (Global Development Alliance) with Freeport, and USAID and the British Department for International Development (DFID) are collaborating on efforts to develop new public-private partnerships with several important companies in the copper sector and help the GDRC implement the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI). USAID, through the Central African Regional Program for the Environment (CARPE) and the Congo Basin Forestry Partnership (CBFP),



is working to promote better management of the forestry sector. The U.S. Trade and Development Agency (USTDA) has granted \$500,000 for a hydroelectric sector pre-feasibility study, and is looking at the transportation (river and rail) sector for further opportunities for U.S. investments in DRC infrastructure.

#### The Scene Today

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¶23. (SBU) Your arrival comes at a moment of continued tension, as well as continued hope. The Congolese people look to their government, and the international community, for help to bring an end to conflicts that have cost billions of dollars, uprooted hundreds of thousands of people and resulted in millions of deaths. These conflicts have also created an atmosphere of widespread insecurity, contributing to a political and judicial vacuum in which women and children are routinely abused, and in which the perpetrators go unpunished. There are clear signs the population is growing impatient with the pace of the government's efforts and skeptical that democracy can solve its problems. In this environment, we ask you to help us to reinforce the following messages:

-- The Congolese people rightly expect responsible leadership at home, as well as supportive international partners. We will continue to support the new leadership to develop transparent practices, establish good governance for the well-being of the Congolese people, and improve the stewardship of its abundant natural resources.

-- They are eager to realize tangible benefits from their investment in democracy. They must cease being made victims of violence. Human rights must be respected and violators punished.

-- Congo has taken remarkable strides to replace war with peaceful democratic change. The successful elections were a tangible demonstration of the people's desire for peaceful governance. The United States is eager to see that momentum continue.

-- We encourage political and military authorities to pursue a peaceful resolution of the security problems which persist in Congo.

-- United States' foreign assistance to the DRC is on the increase across a range of sectors, and we look forward to working with the GDRC to support the country's development agenda.

-- The United States will continue to support and work closely with the GDRC and MONUC to bring about political reconciliation and to prevent further conflict in the DRC and the region.

-- We strongly support the Nairobi and Goma processes and are contributing funds and expertise to ensure their success will bring lasting peace and stability to the region.

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